

Methodology for the Selected Population Tables Historic Comparison Profiles

The data contained in the Selected Population Tables (SPT) are based on the American Community Survey (ACS) sample interviewed from January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2015. The 2015 SPT data products contain estimates for over four hundred highly detailed race, Hispanic origin, ancestry and tribal groups down to the Census tract geographic level. For a table to be released for a particular population group, the desired geographic area (i.e., the state of California) must have at least 50 unweighted sample persons from the population group, based on 2011-2015 ACS 5-year estimates.

The variables included in these comparison tables were limited to those with identical subject categories in both the 2006-2010 and 2011-2015 ACS Selected Population Table data products.

Statistical comparison testing was performed by the California State Data Center utilizing Census Bureau methodology. Details follow below.

The standard error (SE) for an estimate is derived by dividing the Census Bureau's margin of error (MOE) statistic by 1.645. Census Bureau generated SEs were used to calculate statistical significance for estimates. SEs for percentages were recalculated using the estimates and estimates' standard errors. Where A and B are estimates and P is the proportion estimate:

$$P = \frac{A}{B}$$

$$SE(P) = \frac{1}{B} \sqrt{ABS(SE(A)^2 - P^2 \times SE(B)^2)}$$

Next, with the two estimates or percentage estimates (Est_1 and Est_2) and their respective standard errors (SE_1 and SE_2), a Z statistic is calculated:

$$Z = \frac{Est_1 - Est_2}{\sqrt{(SE_1)^2 - (SE_2)^2}}$$

If $Z > 1.645$ or $Z < -1.645$, then the difference can be said to be statistically significant at the 90 percent confidence level. This is indicated by a "*" in the table's Statistical Significance column. "Statistically significant" means that the difference is not likely due to random chance alone.

Median dollar estimates for 2006-2010 ACS 5-year SPT were inflation adjusted to 2015 dollars. These adjustments use the national CPI Research Series Using Current Methods (CPI-U-RS, All Items) since a regional-based CPI is not available for the entire country. Details for this CPI series can be found at <https://www.bls.gov/cpi/research-series.htm>.